

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5 The invention relates to modified oligonucleotides that
are useful for studies of gene expression and for the
antisense therapeutic approach. The invention provides
modified oligonucleotides that inhibit gene expression and
that produce fewer side effects than conventional
phosphorothioate oligonucleotides. In particular, the
10 invention provides modified CpG-containing oligonucleotides
that result in reduced splenomegaly and platelet depletion
when administered to a mammal, relative to conventional
CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotides. The
invention further provides methods for using such
15 oligonucleotides to modulate gene expression *in vivo*,
including such use for therapeutic treatment of diseases
caused by aberrant gene expression.